FANTASTIC
FOUR
MARVEL
16
LGY#709
NORTH
MORTARINO
REBER

Here they are...

Together, they are the

FANTASTIC FOUR

& ALICIA MASTERS-GRIMM

When the Baxter Building was attacked by a horde of invaders from the Negative Zone, Mr. Fantastic shunted it and the surrounding city block into a temporal pocket for protection. Among the displaced were both the Thing and Alicia's children, as well as Franklin and Valeria Richards.

But now that a year has passed, everyone contained within the block has finally returned, and the FF family has been fully reunited.

"EXALT IMAGINATION"

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Fantastic Four Created by
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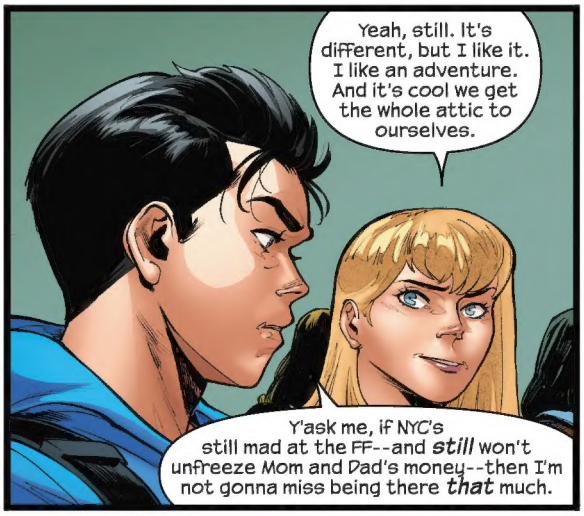
Class, this is Jo and Nicki. They're your new classmates, and they've moved here, to Arizona, all the way from New York City.
I'm an alien warrior from space.
I'm an alien warrior from space and a shape-shifter.
COOOOOOOOL!
Class, this is Franklin. He's moved here with his family.
I used to have these crazy powers where I could create whole universes with a thought, but now I'm just a guy. Oh, and I help out the Fantastic Four.
COOOOOL!!
Class, this is Valeria. Valeria, can you introduce yourself to your new classmates?
I am Valeria Richards, the daughter of Reed and Sue...
...and the goddaughter of Doctor Doom.
COOOOOL!!
Is he really gonna take over the whole world?
Do you think he'd watch my stream??
If he had a dog, would he dress up the dog like him, and would it be called DOGtor Doom, because I drew some fanart where that happened, and could you please show him??

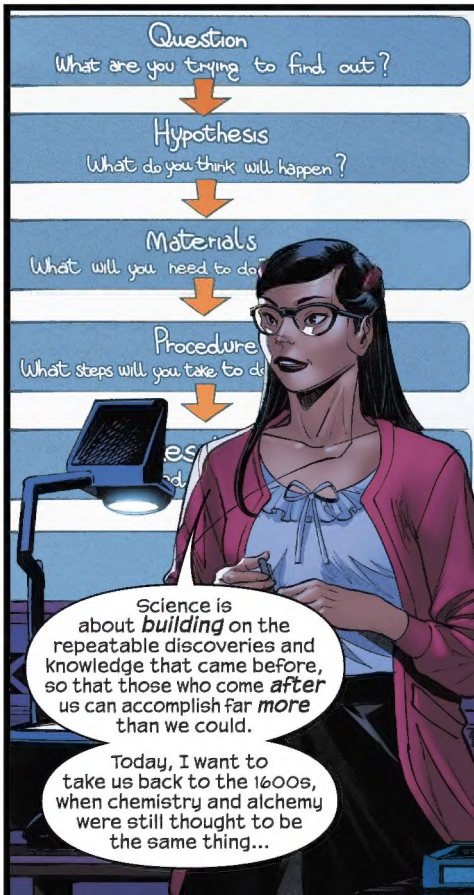
Welp, homeroom loves me.
Oh, you have no idea how much *my* homeroom loves *me*.

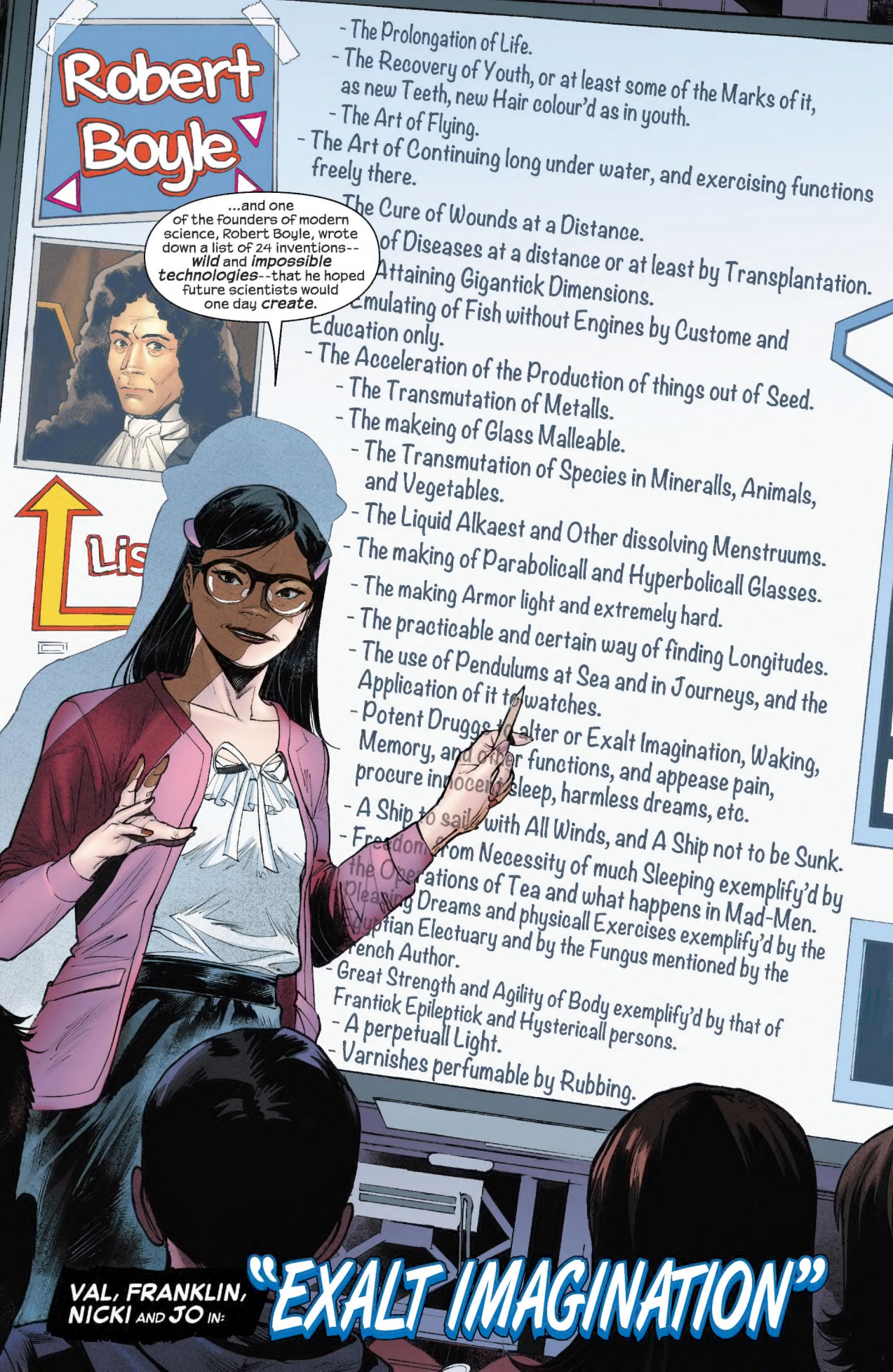
Though I gotta admit, I was a little worried about starting fresh here.
"Starting fresh"? First thing Dad and I did when I got here was build a closet teleporter back to NYC!
Still.


Yeah, still. It's different, but I like it. I like an adventure. And it's cool we get the whole attic to ourselves.
Y'ask me, if NYC's still mad at the FF--and *still* won't unfreeze Mom and Dad's money--then I'm not gonna miss being there *that* much.

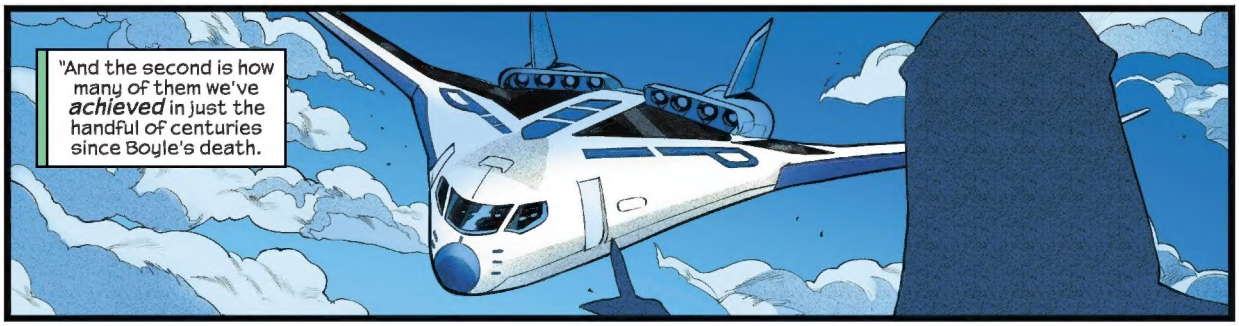
Besides, we are kicking butt at this new-school thing. We're already popular--how hard can some *high school* science class be?
ROOM 202 SCIENCE LA
We've been inside like *sixteen* different kinds of space-time continuums. We *got* this.

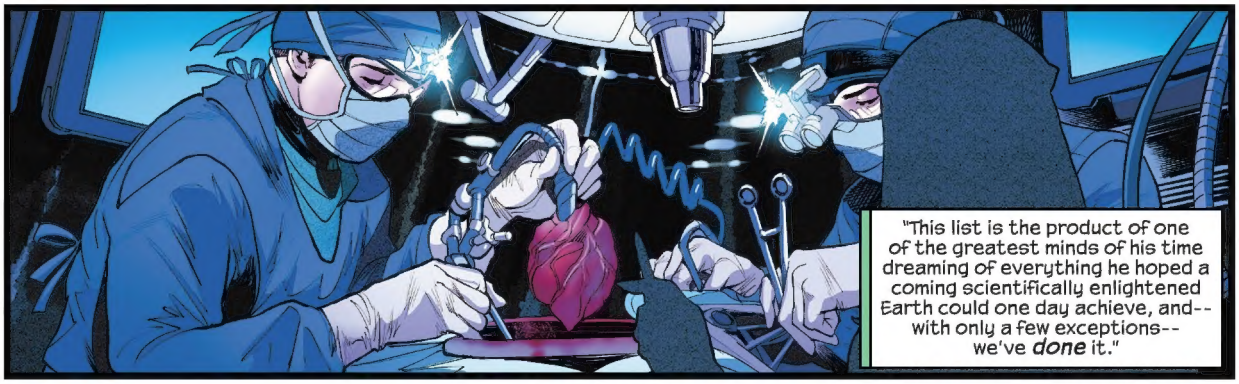
Ah, Franklin and Valeria Richards. You're late. Please take a seat.
Now class--today, we're doing something a little different.


Question
What are you trying to find out?
Hypothesis
What do you think will happen?
Materials
Procedure
Science is about *building* on the repeatable discoveries and knowledge that came before, so that those who come *after* us can accomplish far *more* than we could.
Today, I want to take us back to the 1600s, when chemistry and alchemy were still thought to be the same thing...


Robert Boyle
...and one of the founders of modern science, Robert Boyle, wrote down a list of 24 inventions--*wild* and *impossible technologies*--that he hoped future scientists would one day *create*.
- The Prolongation of Life.
- The Recovery of Youth, or at least some of the Marks of it, as new Teeth, new Hair colour'd as in youth.
- The Art of Flying.
- The Art of Continuing long under water, and exercising functions freely there.
- The Cure of Wounds at a Distance.
- of Diseases at a distance or at least by Transplantation.
- Attaining Gigantick Dimensions.
- Emulating of Fish without Engines by Custome and Education only.
- The Acceleration of the Production of things out of Seed.
- The Transmutation of Metalls.
- The makeing of Glass Malleable.
- The Transmutation of Species in Mineralls, Animals, and Vegetables.
- The Liquid Alkaest and Other dissolving Menstruums.
- The making of Parabolicall and Hyperbolicall Glasses.
- The making Armor light and extremely hard.
- The practicable and certain way of finding Longitudes.
- The use of Pendulums at Sea and in Journeys, and the Application of it to watches.
- Potent Druggs to alter or Exalt Imagination, Waking, Memory, and other functions, and appease pain, procure innocent sleep, harmless dreams, etc.
- A Ship to sail with All Winds, and A Ship not to be Sunk.
- Freedom from Necessity of much Sleeping exemplify'd by the Operations of Tea and what happens in Mad-Men.
- Dreams and physicall Exercises exemplify'd by the Egyptian Electuary and by the Fungus mentioned by the French Author.
- Great Strength and Agility of Body exemplify'd by that of Frantick Epileptick and Hysterickall persons.
- A perpetuall Light.
- Varnishes perfumable by Rubbing.
VAL, FRANKLIN, NICKI AND JO IN:
"EXALT IMAGINATION"

- The practicable and ce
- The use of Pendulum
Applicat of it to
- Potent
Memory, and
procure
- A Ship
Two things are remarkable about this list.
The first is the gamut it runs--from life extension, to flight, to "attaining gigantick dimensions," to scratch-and-sniff stickers.


"And the second is how many of them we've *achieved* in just the handful of centuries since Boyle's death.


"This list is the product of one of the greatest minds of his time dreaming of everything he hoped a coming scientifically enlightened Earth could one day achieve, and--with only a few exceptions--we've *done* it."

We did it through repeated experimentation and observation. Through hypothesis and conclusion.
We did it through *science.*

Your assignment is to pick one of the inventions on Boyle's list that we've achieved and research which technologies and discoveries were necessary precursors for it.
I'm expecting an essay and a brief presentation from each of you.
And if you want to make--and *justify*--your *own* list for the future, that's extra credit.

Man, this homework's *stupid.* A single branch of some retro tech tree and an *essay?* This is a baby assignment for babies.
Your science commander assigned you an overnight mission?
Let me see!
Does your teacher know that I can achieve gigantic dimensions, no problem?
...I'm honestly not sure, actually.
We will aid you in your mission, Valeria and Franklin!
Nah, it's cool. I'm just gonna write up something about h--
--Wait.
Wait, Franklin, this is our *chance.* We can *really* make an impression here. Do something--you know, *fantastic.*
Instead of doing what our teacher *expects* us to do, which is *boring* and *easy*...
...what if we blow her and everyone else's minds by *checking off* one of the items that nobody's even *invented* yet??
Well, there's not a ton. Transmutation's not gonna work, perpetual light breaks thermodynamics...
...wait-- "The Liquid Alkaest and Other dissolving Menstruums." That's a universal solvent, right? Something that can eat through anything?
Nicki and Jo, we'll let you *help* us--*if* you *PROMISE* not to tell *ANY* of our parents what we're up to.
I pledge myself to the task.
I assume Earth parents *love* unexpected surprises!!

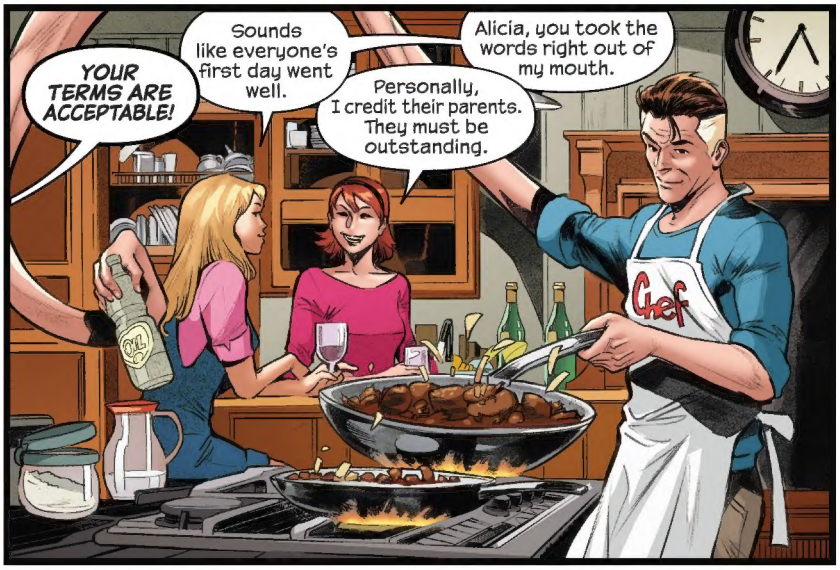
DAD! WE'RE JUST GRABBING SOME STUFF FROM THE BAXTER BUILDING, OKAY? IT'S FOR HOMEWORK!
Franklin, you're home! How was school?
IT WAS FINE, I'LL TELL YOU AT DINNER. WE'RE JUST SUPER EXCITED ABOUT HOMEWORK RIGHT NOW!
REED

GHRMMMM
Come back soon! I'm making my world-famous tacos!

You've claimed to like them in the past!

Shortly:
GHRMMMM

MOTHER! NICKI AND I ARE RETREATING TO THE ATTIC TO DEFEAT OUR ASSIGNED WORK OF HOMES!
Aren't you the eager beavers? I want to hear all about it at dinner!


YOUR TERMS ARE ACCEPTABLE!
Sounds like everyone's first day went well.
Personally, I credit their parents. They must be outstanding.
Alicia, you took the words right out of my mouth.
Chef

And so:
WIKKIPEDOOM
Theoretical chemistry
Overview
Ta-da! Presenting, for the first time...the universal solvent!
Don't get any on ya!

Not bad. We knocked that out before dinnertime.
This is A-pluses all around, easy.
Hey, Val, what stops it from eating through the glass?
SSFFFTTT
AAAAAAH!
AAAAAHHH!
AAAAAHHH!
Franklin! Don't chase your sister!
Or, Val, don't chase your brother!

Cooooooool.
It's not cool, Nicki! That's gonna keep eating its way down until it reaches Earth's liquid core--
--at which point this house turns into an endless super-volcano of SUPERHEATED LIQUID METAL!
That's not entirely true, Valeria. It'll blast out deadly magma first.
Franklin!
I support my sister's earlier assessment. That sounds objectively cool.
Do we tell our parents? Perhaps they can--
No no no, we can fix this!
Kids! Dinner!
Uh, coming!
...I could conceal the house's structural damage with strategically placed books and articles of clothing.
Perfect. And the solvent took longer to eat through glass than anything else. If we use nested layers of glass...
...then I can shape-shift into Super-Skinny Me and go down the hole to collect it!!
Do it.
I'll buy us time.

And so:
Jo-Venn and N'Kalla! I picked these veggies special, fresh from th' garden, and you'll sit down n' eat 'em right now!!
They're on their way! They're just washing their hands--
Cleaning up a spill.
They're washing their hands after cleaning up a spill.
Yes. That is my understanding as well.
Nicki! There ya are! Yer covered in dirt!!
Yes. Because of a problem?
A problem that's fine for now...
...but it's going to get worse really quickly??
Right. Okay. Uh, well, let's get you cleaned u--
No, no, no, I'll help her! I don't mind at all!
May I please be excused thank you byeeee--

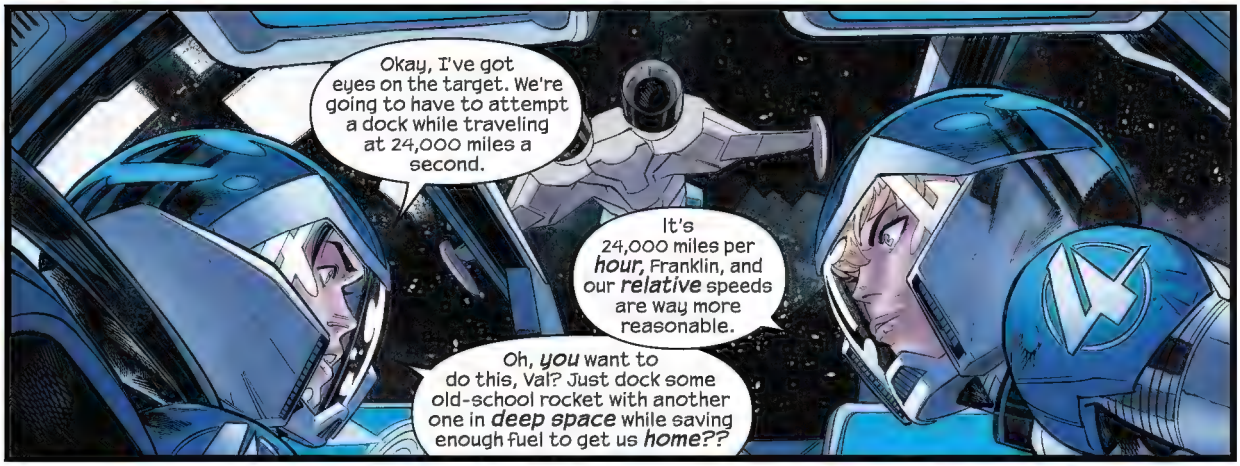
You're certain you got it all?
Yeah, I scooped up a bunch of dirt in the glass, but it ate through that super fast. It took three sets of glasses to get it up...
...and it's *still* quickly going through 'em. I see it too.
So *now* we tell our parents?
No, I can-- *we* can fix this.
We just need to get through dinner first. We'll work in shifts.
Thus:
Mother, may I be excused to evacuate my bladder into this dwelling's special receptacle once more?
You can just say "go to the bathroom," Jo. And yes.
How much water has this kid been *drinkin'*?
crunch
cronch
crunch
I have returned! The experience was fine, but--maybe getting worse?
That's cool because I need to go to the bathroom too! For, *um*, for a different reason!
Kids, if this is a *game* you're playing--
No, no, it's definitely not, be right back!!
I heated the beef to a safe internal temperature of 71.1 degrees centigrade, but it's not *entirely* out of the question that--
It's a game they're playing, honey. The tacos are perfect.
Thank you, darling. They're still not at the level of Raul Richards' tacos from Earth-234952, but it's fun to make the attempt.

That evening...
They're finally asleep.
Ours too.
So what do we do? We're down to our last few glasses, and we can't hold it without 'em!
I don't think we have a choice--we have to get rid of the solvent somehow. But it's not like we can throw it out...
When the Kree choose to dispose of something, we employ a strategy that is as effective as it is simple.
Why, Franklin and Valeria, do we not simply throw it into the sun?
Jo! That is a perfect solution!!
And the Baxter Building has a several rockets on standby! We could teleport there right now and do it!
Your inspired strategy has earned my respect, Jo-Venn.
I thank you.

That's our problem solved forever! *The end.*
And once the engines burn out, the solvent's still safe for the rest of the trip, since without gravity, it won't continue to move through things and eat 'em!
Yes! We truly are the world's greatest science warriors!!
Hooray!

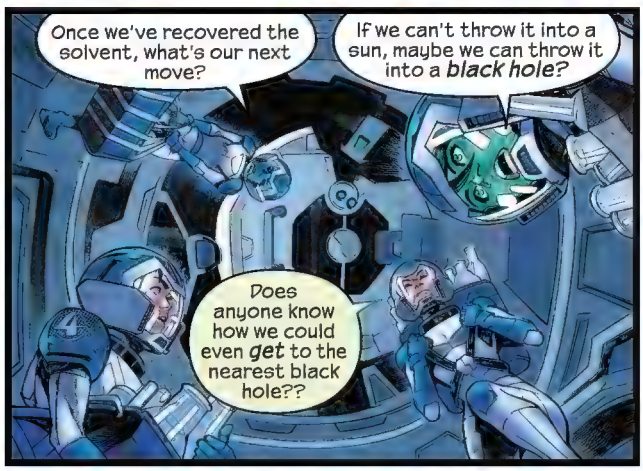
I guess your teacher's just gonna have to take your word for it on the universal solvent thing, huh?
Yeah, I guess so. Looks like me an' Franklin are gonna have to write that stupid essay after all.
Dang. Hadn't even thought of that.
We'll get up early and do it before school. Right now: sleep time.
Good night, Jo!
Until tomorrow, N'Kalla.
Good night, Val an' Franklin! Thanks for lettin' us help out with your homework today!
Of course. We got you. You and Jo are family.
And some bonds can't be broken, right?
OH CRAP, I FORGOT THE SOLVENT'S EXOTIC MOLECULAR BONDS CAN'T BE BROKEN BY HEAT...
...WHICH MEANS INSTEAD OF BEING DESTROYED, IT'LL JUST BE VAPORIZED BY THE SUN AND BLOWN BACK TO EARTH...
...WHERE IT'LL BURROW MILLIONS OF MOLECULE-SIZED HOLES INTO EVERYTHING IT TOUCHES AND TURN THE ENTIRE PLANET INTO SWISS CHEESE!!
1:35

New York City, 4:00 A.M.
Everyone ready?
All boards are go.
We're ready, commander.
Yep!
Then as pilot, navigator and mission commander, I say...
...BLAST OFF!!
FWOOM
FWOOM
This is taking forever. I thought a space flight would be more exciting.
C'mon. We could die at any moment! That's exciting!
Death is the routine day-to-day of the warrior's life, Valeria.


Okay, I've got eyes on the target. We're going to have to attempt a dock while traveling at 24,000 miles a second.
It's 24,000 miles per *hour,* Franklin, and our *relative* speeds are way more reasonable.
Oh, *you* want to do this, Val? Just dock some old-school rocket with another one in *deep space* while saving enough fuel to get us *home??*

No... I trust you, Franklin.
Thank you.
Hold on...!

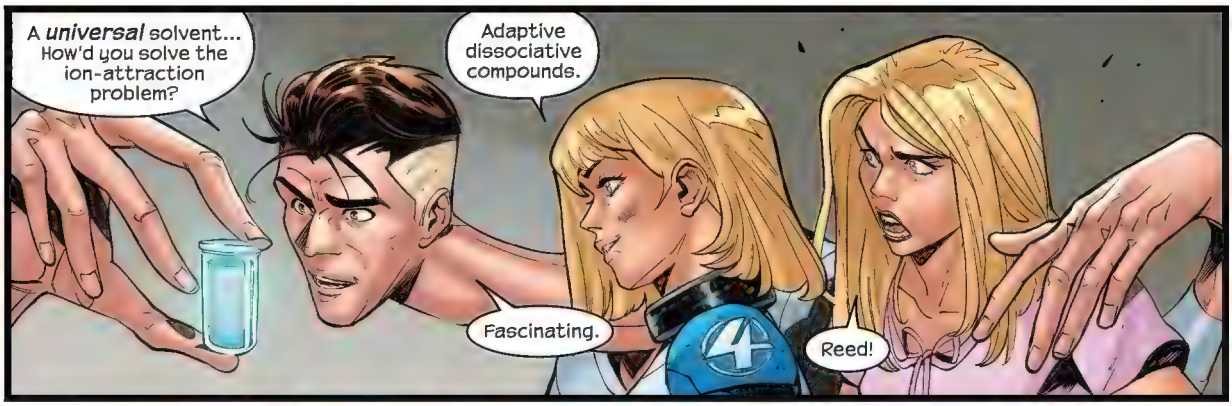
KLUNK
Contact! I did it!!


Once we've recovered the solvent, what's our next move?
If we can't throw it into a sun, maybe we can throw it into a *black hole?*
Does anyone know how we could even *get* to the nearest black hole??

Hey, Val, *now* can we talk to Mom an' Dad?
Ugh!
Fiiiiiine.

You did WHAT?!

Uh, Val made a universal solvent--
What?! You made it too!
--and then Nicki stopped it from eating its way to the Earth's core--
All by myself!
--and then Jo helped fire it into the sun--
I was fantastic.
--and then I flew us there to rescue it from space.
And I was pretty fantastic too, actually.


A universal solvent... How'd you solve the ion-attraction problem?
Adaptive dissociative compounds.
Fascinating.
Reed!

An' you say my kids shape-shifted enough ta save the world and came up with an operation ta launch it inta th' sun?
Benjamin Jacob Grimm.
You have to admit that you're a little impressed, Sue.

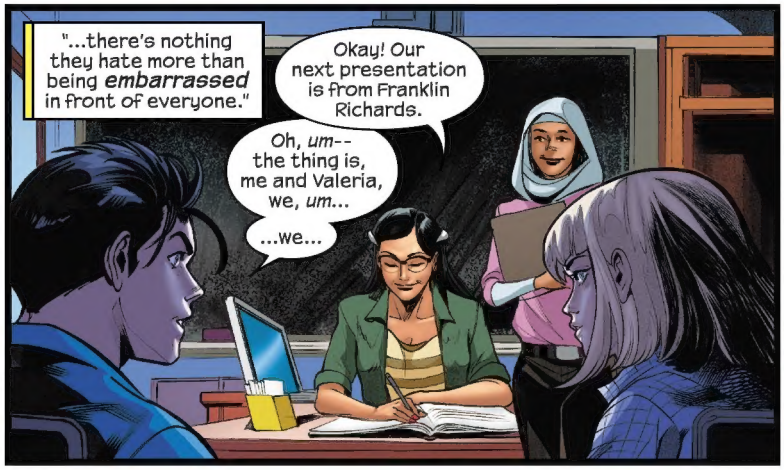
Obviously I'm impressed! But they hid this from us, brought a universal solvent into the house and--and--dissolved all of Petunia's glassware!
Kids, ya shoulda told us from th' beginning.
Exactly!!

Are we grounded?
Well...let's focus on solving the problem before we worry about that.
And to that end, I will say this--
CHVMMMM
--you're actually not the first members of this family to create a universal solvent in their youth.
Bob Boyle's wish list, right?
How'd you know?
There're few things more tempting than a scientific to-do list with just a couple items left undone.
Transparent unstable molecules--same as our suits. They counter the solvent's attempt to dissolve their bonds.
Cooool.
And the fact that your solvent is not technically universal anymore, children, is not a challenge. Please don't make any more.

And so:
Havva good day, kids!
And no threatening the survival of the Earth! Or your classmates!!
SCHOOL BUS
51

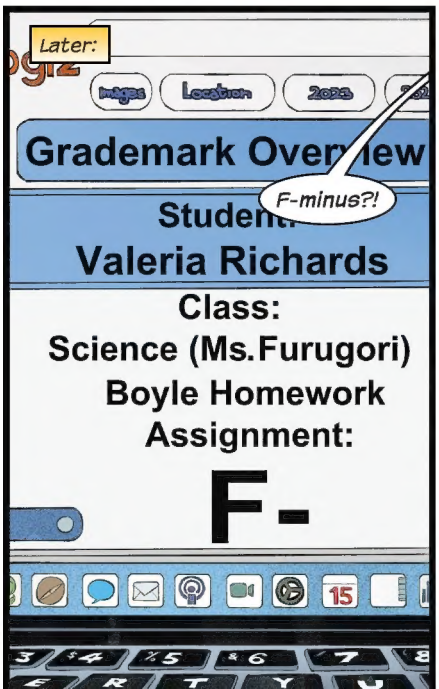
It's good to have them back, darling.
Yeah, it is.
Even wit' holes in th' floors an' ceilings.
You're not worried we let 'em off easy?

Nah. Now Jo an' Nicki know they can always come ta us, even if someone tells 'em they don't have to.
And Franklin and Val fixed their mistake and learned from it, just as I did when I was younger.
Plus they're off to class without any homework done. And if I know our children...


"...there's nothing they hate more than being embarrassed in front of everyone."
Okay! Our next presentation is from Franklin Richards.
Oh, um-- the thing is, me and Valeria, we, um...
...we...

...we... did our essay together?
Unusual and possibly a violation of academic integrity!
Let's see what you've got.

We didn't *write* any essays last night! We didn't even sleep!
You think I don't *know* that? We're gonna improvise!
So, *um*, the completed technology on Boyle's list that me *and* Val decided to look at was, uh-- *um*...
...attaining gigantic dimensions!
Exactly! As you know, this is easily today achieved through the technology of, *uh*... being born a Skrull?
And, yes, alien sexual reproduction isn't really a technology, but--what if it was??
What if indeed??
-PRES
-BOY
LIS
TION


Later:
Grademark Overview
F-minus?!
Valeria Richards
Class:
Science (Ms.Furugori)
Boyle Homework Assignment:
F-

...School might be harder than we thought.
Hey, Nicki, Jo--you guys wanna help me build a *time machine* to--?
MOMMM!!

FANTASTIC FOUR FAN PAGE

Dear Ryan and Iban,

It's important for you to know before I start that I don't particularly like dinosaurs, and I especially dislike most kitschy pop iterations of these prehistoric creatures. So how is it possible that I really, really liked FF #12?

First of all, you had the great idea to make the DinoVerse virtually identical to that of Earth-616. I enjoyed seeing how Iban portrayed Carol, Tony, Stephen, Steve and the rest of the Avengers, altering their uniforms appropriately. The way Reed downloaded the Dino's speech from Tony's armor was logical and exactly what Reed would do, and it really drew me in as the two languages meshed. Ben tearfully hugging his kids, albeit dino-versions, after nearly a year made his sadness something I could feel. Nicki assuming humanoid form and calling Ben "Alternate-Universe Monkey Dad" was funny, touching, classic. God, I miss the humor of the Junior FF! And next month is Dr. Doom being ridden by Dr. Doom? I think I might actually learn to like dinosaurs.

I didn't mind the letter you printed totally in Spanish, as I understood about 85% of it. Congrats to Hannibal for sticking with the FF since 1961. I'm sure some readers were confused. It was an unusual editorial decision to print it in Hannibal's language. The USA is more multilingual now than at any time since the 19th century, true, but in Europe, the various tongues are accommodated in completely different editions. I don't think I've ever read a letter in English in a French *Picsou* comic (*Uncle Scrooge*).

As a final note, the word dinosaur means "terrible lizard," which to my mind is Dr. Doom. Thor, on the other hand, would be Brontosaurus–Thunder Lizard!

Tom Barany PMM FFF
Port Washington, Flamingo Capital of Wisconsin

To be honest, Tom, I just thought that printing and answering that letter in Spanish was a bit of fun.

I really enjoyed this book a lot, but since it's already at twelve issues, it's like a year long...so when will the children of Reed, Sue, Ben and Alicia come back from the future? I mean, it's already been a year so the time for all the people who disappeared in NY is about to come, right?

All the best,
Dave Da Silva

How's about last issue, Dave?

Hello, folks,

I saw the cover of FF #12 and sighed sadly. They were fighting dinosaur Avengers. Pet Avengers are bad enough, but this?

Still, FF is at the top of my reading list, so I opened it up and dove in. The first thing I noticed was that the Thing's head seemed to be a separate object resting on his shoulders. Not an auspicious beginning.

When the Dinovengers were introduced, I realized this was an alternate Earth. Okay, that would make sense. Maybe this won't be so bad. Still, it was weird that they seemed to have the same not-so-secret identities as on Earth-616.

I liked the way languages were handled. With the similarities between the two Earths, it would have been credible to have the dinos speaking English, but giving them their own language made it more fun to read.

And the matching names were explained. Why did I doubt Ryan North? He's never let me down yet. I should have known he would explain everything satisfactorily.

In a recent letter, I complained about the recent overuse of Dr. Doom (my all-time favorite villain), but I have to give you a pass here. That last page was too cool. I want the poster!

Well, until the Fantastic Four winds up on an Earth where the Avengers are banana slugs, Make Mine Marvel!

PMM Scott D. Randel
Everett, WA

You were far from the only reader to be disconcerted by the Thing's apparent lack of a neck, Scott...

Thanks for clearing up the question of Sue's doctorate! Archaeology makes perfect sense as a field that isn't covered by one of the other members of the family. And LOL to "marine biology." One minor gripe: I know the Thing doesn't have a neck, but his head almost looked entirely unattached to his body on the first page. As for the rest of the issue: I am happy to have Ryan North write about dinosaur super heroes as long as he wants. That's some good comics. I'd like to see a Therizinosaurus in there, myself. Clearly we need a crossover with the Pet Avengers sometime soon. It is entertaining that the plot problem here is essentially the same as Secret Wars 2015 (ohmygod, that was eight years ago), which is that two universes are colliding. Unlike in that series, however, Reed seems to have solved this situation in a matter of hours, which sounds about right.

Chris Wildrick

Don't think that Scott would be on board with your notion of a Pet Avengers crossover, Chris. And he's a PMM!

Dear FF team,

It's very interesting to finally learn what subject Sue has a doctorate in the latest issue. Given that Reed's prior "great love," Alyssa Moy, was also an archaeologist, does this mean that Mr. Fantastic has a type? Perhaps, with the Marvel Universe's sliding timeline, it's entirely possible that he was a big fan of a certain tomb-robbing video game in his youth!

It was certainly fun to see some dinosaur versions of familiar characters, doubly so since they are some of the lesser-known species! However, I must wonder why the final page has Dinosaur Doom triumphantly claiming to crush Mr. Fantastic beneath his boot when he's clearly barefoot! I can only guess, with a No-Prize-chasing thought, that the Translation Matrix has some problem picking up the intricacies of the Latverian dialect.

Until we get a dinosaur-verse version of Stegron, Make Mine Marvel!

Laurence J Sinclair
Exeter, UK

Your explanation makes total sense to me, Laurence! Kind of a shame, then, that you didn't include a full address where a No-Prize could be sent.

Tom B
11/27/23

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!

NEXT: